

## NASSAWADOX: Chronology

- 1884 27 Sept: "The track of our railroad has been laid to about 8 miles of Eastville" [PE 27 Sept 1884].

The site of Nassawadox was originally covered with a stand of pine trees [Gordon Wescott].

Nassawadox was "platted largely from the old Rogers farm, the owner of which, John T. Rogers (1851-1907), took an active part in the building up of the community, erecting the first store building and otherwise devoting his time, money, and energy to developing...." [ESH 9 Oct 1908].

27 Sept: "Judge Gunter has granted an injunction restraining the operations of the New York, Philadelphia and Norfolk Railroad Company through the premises of Mr. John W. Tankard of Hadlock, Northampton county, until sufficient cattle guards are put up to protect his crops" [PE 27 Sept 1884].

John T. Rogers was among those with the same complaint: "Injunction recently granted by circuit court restraining the R. R. Co. from removing fences from road bed until cattle guards wre put up in cases in which the following parties were plaintiffs: Jno. W. Tankard, Patsy Fatherly, J. T. Rogers, Obed Kelly and Catherine E. Nottinham and others" [PE 18 Oct 1884].

23 Nov: "The first through fast express train was run over the NYP&N RR on Monday night" from Norfolk to Wilmington [PE 23 Nov 1884].

According to local tradition, the house immediately north of 7755 Seaside Road is the oldest in Nassawadox. Mrs. Whitehead wonders about this, also believes 10248 Rogers, next door to her, is equally as old. Undoubtedly older than either is the old Rogers Home, a farmhouse back in the field when the railroad came through, now located at 10005 Rogers Drive [Whitehead].

The Rogers Store, first in Nassawadox, is still standing, but is abandoned and decaying. Later owners included Willard Henry, Otto Shrieve, and \_\_\_\_ Boole. In the 1930s A. N. Bell operated a 5&10¢ store in the annex at the eastern end [Whitehead].

- 1885 10 Jan: NYP&N Railroad schedule appears in all local papers after this date, but Upshur's Station is not listed, between Exmore and Birdsnest [PE 10 Jan 1885ff].
- 1886 27 Mar: "The name of Upshur's station in Northampton has been changed to Nassawadox. A post office has been established there with Mr. John T. Rogers as postmaster" [PE 27 March 1886=ESN 3/24/1966].
- 1887 26 Nov: John R. Tankard sells quarter lot near Nassawadox Station for a school, at NE corner of Seaside and Franktown Road [N43:251].
- 1888 28 Apr: "We have a building boom in prospect. Several handsome dwellings are to be erected here shortly. A large barrel factory has just been completed by the Jones Bros." [PE 28 April 1888=PE 5/2/1963].
- 1894 Mill that becomes Northampton Lumber Company, originally owned by \_\_\_\_ Schroder, is purchased by J. B. Savage and sold to Chandler and Walker [Gordon Wescott].  
Mears says: "In 1897 or 1898 the Northampton Lumber Company was started at Nassawadox by Isaac and William E. Walker. It was incorporated in 1903" [Shoreline, ESN 20 April 1967].

1896? Franktown Implement Company founded(?) [ESH 9 Oct 1908].

1897 Building now used as Little Italy Restaurant erected this year. The original post office was located in the eastern end of this building [Whitehead].

1901 Mill becomes B. D. Holland and Company [Gordon Wescott].

1902 Hotel is operating in this year on N side of Rogers Street, W of Route 13 on site of the brick store building [Shatters I #3 (Fall 1975) p 54; Hatton Phillips/Jarvis/Whitehead].

1903 1 March: Northampton Lumber Company organized by brothers J.C., I.S., and W. E. Walker, J. W. Chandler, and B. D. Holland, 250 shares stock @ \$100. Sawmill and lumberyard built adjacent to railroad tracks [ESN 8 Aug 1963].

14 Oct: "Miss Maggie Duncan...is yet teaching in the old school house at Nassawadox...awaiting the finishing touch of the [Franktown-Nassawadox] high school" [ESH 14 Oct 1903?].

After the school was closed, it was purchased by B. H. Elliott who converted it into a home, no longer standing; Elliott operated a garage next door on the N, the cement slab foundation of which is still in place [Whitehead].

"Recognition of the need for a hospital was first made in 1903 by Dr. W. J. Sturgis" [NAM Hospital brochure].

Dr. William J. Sturgis (1878-1960) began his medical practice in 1903, and began promoting the hospital almost immediately. First public meeting concerning it was held in Rogers Store; decision to issue stock at \$50/share [Sturgis, ESN 14 Jan 1987].

1906 11 Oct: Bank of Northampton at Nassawadox founded; W. E. Thomas Pres, E. G. Tankard V-Pres, W. E. Roberts cashier [ESH 9 Oct 1908; Gordon Wescott].

"C. T. James and R. D. James opened a general merchandise store on the seaside road in east section of Nassawadox. In 1908 James was elected deputy treasurer of Northampton and sold out to R. D. James & Son, Harry M. James, son of R. D., who became a member of the firm. Later operated grocery store in center of town. In recent years built store west of railroad. Now operated as H. M. James Co., owners being Harry M. James and Harry M. James Jr" [Shoreline, ESN 27 April 1966].

James Store stood on E side of Seaside Road at end of Rogers, immediately south of 7735 Seaside Road; it later burned [Whitehead].

There were at least 3 other stores in this section of town:

(1) Jack Nottingham Store, at SW corner of Rogers and Seaside Road (plus another store adjacent to it?)

(2) two stores just north of the James Store, at 7725 and 7733 Seaside Road (Whitehead).

1908 ME Church-S, which has been meeting on second story of James storehouse, purchases a lot on E side of Seaside Road and erects "a very creditable building" under the leadership of Rev. D. G. C. Butts [RC 507].

Businesses in town in this year include:

John T. Rogers & Son, general merchandise (original store of 1884)

W. T. Roberts, dry goods, furnishings and groceries

Franktown Implement Company, E. G., F. B. & S. D. Tankard

E. M. Ashby & Co., general merchandise and millinery

Northampton Lumber Company  
Bank of Northampton  
C. T. & R. D. James, general merchandise  
Tilghman Brothers, hardware, farm implements, gristmill (Marionville)[ESH 9 Oct 1908].

- 1911 8 April: "A new enterprise, the manufacture of cigars, has been started at Nassawadox by Oswald S. Mears and Walter B. Widgen, which merit the patronage of all lovers of the weed on the Eastern Shore. Two cigarmakers are now turning out daily 1,000 cigars made of the best tobacco for the firm and it is proposed to enlarge its capacity by making just as good, or better cigar, for the money than can be bought elsewhere. Every merchant will of course give them a trial order" [PE(?) 8 April 1911=ESN 4/2/1986].

Marguerite Wescott Whitehead (b 1905) does not remember the cigar factory, but does remember that Oswald Mears, the railroad agent, was "always starting something." He was the first to own a car in Nassawadox; lived at site of present PO with a beautiful wife, though he himself was "ugly as sin" [Whitehead].

At about this time, probably during this year, a small store building that stood in the yard of 10258 Rogers Drive is moved to its present location at 7401 Railroad Street. There it becomes the store of John P. Dunton, later the Northampton Free Library [Whitehead].

- 1914 16 Nov: Isaac Deshield Jones (1883-1940) buys lot on S side of Rogers Street (behind present Shore Store); soon thereafter (exact date uncertain) opens Strand Theatre on this site [Chronicles].

Home of Marguerite Whitehead (10258 Rogers Drive) erected in this year [Whitehead].

This was the home of Joshua Pitts Wescott (1868-1949), at one time Commissioner of Revenue for Northampton County. Among visitors to his home were Senator Harry F. Byrd, Senator S. Otis Bland (who was instrumental in erection of the hospital), and Governor Claude A. Swanson, later Secretary of the Navy (Whitehead).

Drugstore erected this year [Whitehead].

- 1917 21 Sept: First showing of "Birth of a Nation" on ESV is at Strand Theatre [PE 15 Sept 1917].
- 1919 1 Nov: Theatre, now known as the Victory, is totally destroyed by fire [ESH 8 Nov 1919; PE 8 Nov 1919].

USGS map of this year shows road pattern in town; Route 13 does not yet parallel the railroad; most of town clusters in NE corner at Rogers and Seaside Roads.

- 1920 August: Ladies Auxiliary of Franktown and Nassawadox organized to promote the founding of a hospital; pledges \$5,000 for the cause [Gordon Wescott; Whitehead].

11 Sept: Hotel is purchased by J. T. Hambrick for \$8000 [N77:171].

Hambrick insisted that Nassawadox was his kind of town: "no church, no jail, no school" [Whitehead].

11 Sept: "Robert E. Smith, Nassawadox, Va. GRIST MILL. Manufacturer of Poultry & Hog Feed, ground from sweet grains in my own mill...." [Ad in PE 11 Sept 1920]. (According to Whitehead, located south of town east of Seaside Road just above Marionville.)

25 Sept: Colored School is now in operation at SW corner of Giddens and Franktown Road;

building was owned not by school board but by private trustees [ESH 25 Sept 1920; NCSB 3 April 1930: N109:88].

Oct: Auxiliary serves luncheon in office over Rogers store; 45¢ for chicken salad, country ham, biscuits, potato chips, dessert, etc. [Whitehead].

Home of Dr. W. J. Sturgis e at 10084 Rogers Drive was erected in early 1920s, standing by 1925 [Whitehead].

J. A. Kern of Chicago employed to conduct bi-county campaign to raise funds for hospital; stock-holding idea abandoned, and previous stockholders' monies returned [Sturgis, ESN 14 Jan 1987].

- 1921 Victory Theatre is again in operation on second floor of building now housing the Textile Shop, George B. Dunton, proprietor [ESH 20 Dec 1921; Whitehead].

- 1923 (or 1924): Probably in this year (or a little later?) that Route 13 is paved and re-routed through town adjacent to the railroad tracks. Look for documentation.

The "stone road" was "the favorite place to roller skate before traffic started" [Elizabeth Richards Hamilton].

But though Route 13 was first paved street in Nassawadox, the houses on S side of Rogers Drive had paved sidewalks years earlier, after the wreck of a train in Nassawadox carrying cement [Whitehead].

Brick grocery store of Ralph Ross (later the Assembly of God church) is operating on N side of Rogers Drive by this year [N79:164 (1921); N81:125 (1923)—unclear which deed refers to the store].

- 1924 Probable date of closing of Victory Theatre; no "talkies" ever shown there [Chronicles].

1 Feb: Hospital site sold to Northampton-Accomack Memorial Hospital by Northampton Accomack Hospital, Inc. [N82:147].

Oct: Lot for hospital purchased from James B. Rogers [Gordon Wescott].

- 1927 Businesses in town in this year include:

Farmers Supply and Storage Corporation, manufacturers of barrels, general merchandise; W. T. Roberts Pres, J. W. Nottingham V-P, E. G. Tankard Sec-Tres/Gen Mgr; 12 employees. (According to Whitehead, located S side of Rogers Street, W of present PO).

Northampton Lumber Company, manufacturers of lumber and truck barrels, sale of hardware and building materials; 50 employees; consolidation of Walker & Chandler and B. D. Holland & Co.; J. C. Walker Pres, W. E. Walker V-P, J. L. Walker Sec, B. D. Holland treas; "The largest lumber, building material, and hardware plant on the Eastern Shore of Virginia" [Economic & Social Survey, pp 45, 47].

- 1924 Methodist church is virtually defunct, and property is mortgaged for \$1,000 [RC 507].

- 1928 24 Mar: "The building committee of the Northampton Accomack Memorial Hospital opened the bids for construction of the building on March 20. The low bidder was D. A. Dunton, of Nassawadox, with \$25,840.00" [PE 24 March 1928=PE 3/21/1963].

Building was virtually a duplicate of George Ben Johnson Memorial Hospital in Abingdon, Virginia; required 150,000 bricks and a carload of patented windows [Sturgis, ESN 14 Jan 1987].

For aerial view of W side of town, showing hospital at about this time, see Nordstrom, *Eastern Shore of Virginia in Days Past*, 11.

17 Aug: First patient is admitted to new 25-bed hospital [NAM brochure, 1985].

Hospital originally had three doctors, three nurses, and a superintendent [Gordon Wescott].

Guests present at dedication included G. Walter Mapp, John E. Nottingham, and Hugh S. Cumming, U.S. Surgeon-General [Turman 233].

Methodist property sold; building is still standing [RC 507].

- 1934 27 April: "Fire did serious damage at Nassawadox yesterday when the grist mill, store house, and home belonging to W. M. Tilghman were completely destroyed. Both the Exmore and Onancock Volunteer Fire Departments were notified. The Onancock company received the alarm about 11:45, but were stopped before they reached the scene of the fire. The Exmore company was present, but were unable to be of much assistance in checking the flames.

"It is understood that there was no insurance on the building.

"Mr. Tilghman and his son had been living in the quarters. A few pieces of the furniture were saved but a majority of it was destroyed by the flames.

"The exact cause of the fire is unascertained" [ESN 27 April 1934].

This business was located 10297-10395 Rogers Drive. The site is now occupied by two bungalows. A small filling station once operated right in the NW corner of the road here (Whitehead).

- 1936 Population (white only) is about 275; town has seen 19 stores since inception [Gordon Wescott].
- 1940 Old hotel, vacant (since about 1929? early Depression?), moved back to accommodate erection of Henry James' store now standing on Rogers at Route 13. Hotel served as apartment building for many years [Whitehead].
- 1941 Harry James' store at NW corner of Rogers and Route 13 erected; home to which it is attached was that of B. Dunton [Whitehead].
- 1945 Federal appropriation of \$128,000 makes possible expansion of the hospital to 72 beds [Shoreline, 17 March 1966].
- 1948 See photo of Rogers Street looking E from across Route 13 [Badger, *Pictorial History*, 137].
- 1950 Town businesses include Northampton Canning Company [Shoreline, ESN 22 July 1965].
- 1951 July: Rev. & Mrs. Julian B. Goggin begin work that will result in Calvary Assembly of God, first white Pentecostal congregation in Northampton County; Goggins operate out of a portable tabernacle, and attempt first to build a church in Exmore before settling in Nassawadox (see 1958 below) [RC 295].

Bessie B. Anderson Memorial Nurses' Home dedicated at NAM Hospital [Badger 137].

Bessie Badger Anderson (1876-1950) lost her husband after having to take him off the Shore of an appendectomy, was founder of the Ladies' Auxiliary which raised money for years before the hospital could be built [Sturgis, ESN 14 Jan 1987].

- 1952 (?) Douglas Packing Company founded [N123:41].

- 1953 Colored school closes at end of 1952-53 session; consolidated with Hare Valley [ESN 28 Aug 1952, 27 Aug 1953].  
Building was still standing in 1974 when KM photographed it, but is now gone.
- 1955 Sawmill closes [ESN 8 Aug 1963].
- 1958 Calvary Assembly of God occupies store building on N side of Rogers Street, refitting it for church and parsonage [RC 295].
- Nov: "This town has filed motion to incorporate" [ESN 28 Nov 1963].  
Businesses in town at this time include:  
Northampton Lumber Company  
Elliott's Filling Station (site of present Shore Stop)  
N-A Memorial Hospital  
Northampton County Healty Center  
R. B. Upshur Store (site of Sessions Grocery)  
P. W. Tankard (E of railroad at S end of town; grading sheds?)  
Douglas Can Company (S of Franktown Road at railroad)  
Rogers Store  
Post Office (in Little Italy building)[Plat Book 5:85].
- 1959 Feb: "Williard Henry was named the first Mayor of this newly incorporated town Tuesday as over 92% of the registered voters turned out to cast their ballots" [ESN 27 Feb 1964].
- 1960 Population: 650.
- Walter Trower founds and builds Faith Tabernacle Holiness Church of God Live On [RC 376].
- 1965 16 Feb: Hearing to be held in Richmond on Pennsylvania Railroad request to close Nassawadox Station (also Machipongo and Melfa) [ESN 6 Dec 1989].
- 1966 As railroad declines, Nassawadox is one of four remaining full-time stations open on ESV [Shoreline, ESN 14 July 1966].
- 1968 5 July: Construction contract signed for new 125-bed hospital [NAM brochure 1985].
- 1970 Population: 591.
- 1971 Sept: New hospital opened [NAM brochure 1985].
- 1973 Old hospital demolished [Badger, *Pictorial History*, 181; yet see pg 188 where he says 1971, probably a mistake].
- 1980 July: New dialysis unit at hospital opened in former Home Economics Cottage of Atlantic High School (prior to that of Temperanceville High), moved by rail to Nassawadox and renovated [ESN 31 Jan 1980, 20 Dec 1982].
- Population: 630.
- 1981 Calvary Assembly of God has moved to Cheriton; old store is for sale [ESN 19 Feb 1981].  
Purchased by Drury M. Stith 1980 [N202:40].
- 1982 18 new patient rooms added on 4th floor of hospital, bringing capacity to 145 beds [NAM

brochure 1985].

1983 19 Feb: Accomack Seventh-Day Adventist Church, formerly located in Onley, has moved into the "Dr. Stith auditorium" in Nassawadox [ESN 17 Feb 1983].

1985 Abandoned hotel dismantled about this year [Whitehead].  
Rogers Store functioned until mid-1980s [Whitehead].

1990 Population: 564 (7th largest on ESV).

Hat Shop of Mildred Mapp, located at \_\_\_\_, is donated to Nature Conservancy by Scott Walker, moved to Brownsville Farm, and converted into educational facility with view of wetlands there [*The Islands*, Spring 1990, pp. 3-5].

199? Northampton Free Library opened in old John B. Dunton store building at 7401 Railroad Street.

1994 Miracle Temple of Faith Church, Bishop Lenwood Wright pastor, is in operation in old store building on W side of Hospital Avenue opposite nursing home [ESN 20 Aug 1994].

My photo of this church is earlier than 1994, but undated—1992?